



## WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH IN IDAHO

*From The  
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health*



### State Profile 2002

---

*Delivering on the Nation's promise:  
Safety and health at work for all people through prevention.*

---

### The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

NIOSH is the primary federal agency responsible for conducting research and making recommendations for the prevention of work-related illness and injury. NIOSH is located in the Department of Health and Human Services in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The NIOSH mission is to provide national and world leadership to prevent work-related illness, injury, disability, and death by gathering information, conducting scientific research, and translating the knowledge gained into products and services. As part of its mission, NIOSH supports programs in every state to improve the health and safety of workers. NIOSH has developed this document to highlight recent NIOSH programs important to workers and employers in Idaho.

### The Burden of Occupational Illness and Injury in Idaho

- In Idaho, there are approximately 626,000 million individuals employed in the workforce.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2000, 35 workers died as a result of workplace injuries.<sup>2</sup>
- The transportation and public utilities industry had the highest number of fatalities, followed by construction.<sup>2</sup>
- In 1999, the most recent year for which data are available, the rate of fatal workplace injuries was 6.8 deaths per 100,000 workers—above the national average rate of 4.5 deaths per 100,000 workers.<sup>2</sup>

### The Cost of Occupational Injury and Illness in Idaho

In 2000, the most recent year for which data are available, a total of \$167.7 million was paid for workers' compensation claims by Idaho private insurers, self-insured employers, and state funds.<sup>3</sup> This figure does not include compensation paid to workers employed by the federal government and also underestimates the total financial burden for private sector businesses, since only a fraction of health care costs and earnings lost through work injuries and illnesses is covered by workers' compensation. Chronic occupational illnesses like cancer are substantially under-reported in workers' compensation systems because work-relatedness is often difficult to establish.

# How NIOSH Prevents Worker Injuries and Diseases in Idaho

## Health Hazard Evaluations (HHEs) and Technical Assistance

NIOSH evaluates workplace hazards and recommends solutions when requested by employers, workers, or state or federal agencies. Since 1993, NIOSH has responded to ten requests for HHEs in Idaho in a variety of industrial settings, including the following example:

### ***McCall, Idaho: Mold Remediation of an Office Building***

In May 2002, NIOSH responded to a request by the U.S. Forest Service to provide technical assistance with the development of mold remediation protocols for a Forest Service office building in McCall, Idaho. In 2001, the Forest Service had hired contractors to correct a moisture intrusion problem in the building's basement. Groundwater combined with runoff from snow melt through seeps or cracks in the basement walls had stained and damaged wallboard in four rooms and parts of the basement's hallway. The chronic presence of moisture had resulted in areas of fungal growth that needed remediation. NIOSH investigators recommended that the remediation be conducted carefully by an experienced contractor under the supervision of an experienced industrial hygienist. Suggested specifications were provided for the remediation efforts. The NIOSH document "Good Practice Guidelines" also was provided to help the Forest Service maintain acceptable indoor environmental quality during remediation work at the McCall office.

*Additional information regarding NIOSH services and activities can be accessed through the NIOSH home page at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/homepage.html> or by calling the NIOSH 800-number at 1-800-356-NIOSH (1-800-356-4674).*

---

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Current Population Survey, 2000.

<sup>2</sup>DOL, BLS in cooperation with state and federal agencies, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, 1999-2000.

<sup>3</sup>National Academy of Social Insurance, *Workers' Compensation: Benefits, Coverage, and Costs, 2000 New Estimates*, May 2002.

